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Viewing cable 07USNATO479, BUILDING SUPPORT FOR A NAC VISIT TO GEORGIA

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
07USNATO479	2007-09-05 16:50	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Mission USNATO

Appears in these articles:

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 000479
SIPDIS
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/06/2017
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [NATO](#) [GG](#)
SUBJECT: BUILDING SUPPORT FOR A NAC VISIT TO GEORGIA
Classified By: Ambassador Victoria Nuland for reason
1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (U) This cable contains an action request.
Please see paragraphs 2 and 7.

12. (C) SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUEST: At a September 4 informal discussion among NATO Perm Reps, there was significant movement towards consensus in favor of the proposed October 3-4 visit of the North Atlantic Council

(NAC) to Tbilisi. However, several Allies -- Germany, Greece, Luxembourg, and Belgium -- remained opposed and several more -- France, Spain, and the Netherlands -- were non-committal. Perm Reps agree to revisit the issue on Tuesday, September 11 for a final decision on whether the NAC would make the trip to Georgia or the Secretary-General (SYG) would travel alone. In light of the importance of a positive decision both to the integrity of NATOs Intensified Dialogue process and to Georgias ambitions to move to NATO Membership Action Plan, post requests the Department instruct Embassies Berlin, Athens, Madrid, Luxembourg, Brussels, Paris and The Hague to demarche host governments on U.S. support for a NAC visit to Tbilisi, in order to recognize NATO appreciation for the government of Georgias progress on reforms, which are integral to Georgias Intensified Dialogue with NATO. END SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUEST.

13. (C) At the weekly informal NATO Perm Reps coffee on September 4, SYG Jaap de Hoop Scheffer strongly urged the NAC to join him on the proposed October 3-4 visit to Tbilisi. The SYG said a visit by the NAC would be an opportunity to support Georgias undeniable progress in reforms, to express NATO appreciation for the government of Georgias restraint in the face of Russian provocations, and to send Georgia the right messages directly on the need for continued progress and restraint.

14. (C) Germany led opposition to a NAC visit. German Charge Wunderlich said Berlin is firmly opposed to the visit because the timing, implying that recent tensions between Georgia and Russia over the August 6 missile incident and between Russia and the West over Kosovo made the visit inopportune. Greek Political Counselor Georges was more explicit and said the NAC should not make the visit because of the likely Russian reaction: It would be best if the NATO Secretary General traveled alone to Tbilisi because some Allies do not want to anger Russia. French Ambassador Duque said Paris was not opposed to the visit in principle because it was a natural part of NATOs Intensive Dialogue with Georgia, but urged the PermReps to return to the issue on September 11 for a final decision.

15. (C) Spain argued a trip should not take place until after the OSCE releases a formal report on the August 6 missile incident. Dutch Perm Rep Schaper said the Dutch were cautious, but would not block consensus

16. (C) Ambassador Nuland noted that there would be no better time for the NAC visit than the proposed dates in October given upcoming Russian Duma and Presidential elections. She also said the visit was a natural part of Georgias Intensified Dialogue with NATO. Allies supporting a NAC visit included Canada, whose Perm Rep Mcrae strongly supported the NAC visit and remarked in response to Spanish arguments that it would be unwise for NATO to put off a decision because of the possible actions of another International Organization. Denmark and the UK also strongly supported the visit, noting that the NAC had already visited Russia on June 25-26 and had earlier visited Ukraine, the other country in NATOs Intensified Dialogue. Norway, Turkey, and Portugal said they would agree to the visit as long as it was in no way explicitly linked to a possible decision to invite Georgia into NATOs Membership Action Plan.

17. (C) Action Request: USNATO requests that the Department instruct relevant embassies to relay USG views on the advisability of a NAC trip to Georgia.

18. (U) We have used the following arguments and offer them as suggestions:
-- NATO Allies have engaged Georgias Government in an Intensive Dialogue that began two years ago. Most Allies, including the US, have acknowledged Georgias strong progress. A NAC visit to Georgia is an opportunity for the NAC to support Georgias progress and to ask for more reform.
-- NATO has a relationship with Georgia through its Intensified Dialogue and a visit by the NAC is a natural part

of this relationship. The NAC has already visited Russia this year and has previously visited Ukraine, the other country in Intensified Dialogue.

-- The Government of Georgia has shown restraint, maturity, and concern for regional stability in its measured response to several provocations and violations of Georgias airspace and territorial sovereignty. A NAC visit would encourage Georgia to continue to show restraint and to consult closely with the Allies.

-- (as appropriate) We need to be careful not to signal to Russia that it has a veto on issues such as NAC travel.

NULAND